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COUNTRY Soviet-Controlled Area REPORT [REDACTED]

TOPIC Heavy-Duty Flatcars Capable of Transporting Medium and Heavy Tanks in the Soviet-Controlled Area 50X1

EVALUATION [REDACTED] PLACE OBTAINED [REDACTED] 50X1-HUM

DATE OF CONTENT [REDACTED]

DATE OBTAINED [REDACTED] DATE PREPARED 11 April 1950

REFERENCES [REDACTED]

PAGES 4 ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE) 1 sketch [REDACTED] 50X1-HUM

REMARKS [REDACTED]

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1. General

a. Special heavy-duty cars with the necessary capacity and loading platform are required for the shipping of medium and heavy tanks. The required cars are four or six-axle cars (this number of axles is required for a better distribution of axle pressure) ranging from a minimum load capacity of 30 tons up to 50 tons and having a usable length of 8.8 to 15 meters. Standard two-axle flatcars, due to their insufficient load capacity of 15 to 20 tons, cannot be used or to only a very limited extent.

b. The rolling stock of a country generally includes a small percentage of such four-axle and six-axle flatcars. [REDACTED] such heavy-duty flatcars represent:

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1 to 1½ percent of the total inventory of freight cars in countries with a highly developed railway system (Soviet Zone of Germany and Austria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia),

under 1 percent in countries with a less dense railway net and less industrialized (Poland, Bulgaria, Rumania, Yugoslavia).

c. If suitable flatcars are not available in sufficient numbers, the Soviets often use 2 flatcars of a lesser load capacity for the loading of heavy tanks (see Annex). By using these two cars as one unit, the center of the tank being placed above the buffers resting on iron platforms, the required load capacity is obtained. This procedure will, however, always remain a makeshift measure detrimental to railroad operations.

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2. official records are available only for the Soviet Zone of Germany. For this reason only an estimate based on the empirical values mentioned in para 1b above is possible.

a. Soviet zone of Germany:

- (1) Heavy-duty flatcars of four and six axles available in the entire zone according to statistical records (status of 30 June 1948):

Serviceable:	1,025 cars	50X1-HUM
Slightly damaged:	253 cars	
Heavily damaged:	193 cars	
Total:	1,471 cars	

- (2) Break-down of flatcars available in the Berlin Railroad District, according to local registrations (status 30 April 1949):

(a) Four-axle flatcars with a load capacity of up to

25 tons	-	9
30 tons	-	73
35 tons	-	104
40 tons	-	39
45 tons	-	3
50 tons	-	8
upward of 50 tons	-	4

- (b) Six-axle flatcars with a load capacity of up to

40 tons	-	1
50 tons	-	12
60 tons	-	-
80 tons	-	2

total: 255 cars

However, the stock reports of a single railroad district administration are of only limited value as the reported figures are subject to daily fluctuations due to the constant exchange of cars between the individual railroad districts.

- (3) For the entire Soviet Zone of Germany the present stock of such heavy-duty flatcars is estimated at 1,300 to 1,500. In appraising this figure it has to be considered that these cars are in poor condition and rather over-age so that 20 to 30 percent of them are constantly deadlined for repair.

The number of newly built cars added to the rolling stock is believed to be very small since a rolling stock construction program did not start in the Soviet zone before 1949.

- (4) The scarcity of this type of flatcars and the intense Soviet interest in them is illustrated by a Soviet decree dated 16 January 1950 ordering the railroad district administrations to report twice a day their stocks of serviceable

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heavy duty cars and those capable of transit operations (type designations: SS1, SSJ, SSys, SSysm).

b. poland:

The polish freight car park is estimated at 150,000 to 180,000 units compared with an inventory number of 159,937 in 1939. This estimate is reached by considering the war losses on one hand and the considerable booty made in the polish occupied territory on the other. Before the war only few heavy-duty flatcars were available in Poland; those available at present, an estimated 300 to 500 at most, represent former German stocks, only a minor percentage being post-war acquisitions (imports or own production).

c. czechoslovakia:

Due to the very efficient railroad car industry of the country the number of freight cars available in Czechoslovakia has reached, if not exceeded, the 1937 level of 95,600 cars. The present stock of freight cars may be assumed to amount to 100,000 units, including 1,000 to 1,200 heavy-duty flatcars.

The type designation of these cars is "p" (plosinovy) with a small letter attached, indicating special designs as to the load capacity. A relatively large number of German cars of this type was left in the country by the Germans at the end of the war. These cars formed the nucleus of the present park of such flatcars which is currently being expanded by new constructions.

d. Hungary:

The 1938 freight car park amounted to 54,773 units. Taking into account both war losses and post-war constructions, it is rather safe to estimate the present park of freight cars at 35,000 units. (The country has two modern railroad car factories, the Ganz & Co firm in Budapest and the Győr Railroad Car Factory.) The number of heavy-duty flatcars may be estimated at 300 to 400.

The prototype of a four-axle flatcar provided with ball-bearings and having a load capacity of 40 tons was built at the Ganz & Co Railroad Car Plant in 1949. Its type designation is LA. It may be assumed that the quantity production of this type car has started and that this production will lead to a gradual increase of the available stock of heavy-duty flatcars.

e. rumania:

The present freight car park is estimated at 55,000 to 65,000 (1938 inventory number: 66,295). In accordance with para 1b above, the number of available heavy-duty flatcars is estimated at 200 to 300. The bulk of these cars is probably of German origin.

f. Bulgaria:

Approximately 10,000 freight cars were available in late 1948. Probably only 50 to 80 of these are capable of transporting heavy tanks, since Bulgaria did not have such flatcars before the war and the number of cars left by the Germans was small.

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g. Yugoslavia:

No figures relative to the size of the freight car park of this country are available so that there is no basis for an estimate of the available number of heavy-duty cars.

h. Soviet Zone of Austria:

Reliable data are not available. On the basis of a rough estimate the freight car park is believed to amount to 13,000 to 15,000, including an estimated 130 to 180 heavy-duty flatcars. Many German freight cars were left in Austria at the end of World War II.

3. Since none of the mentioned countries has large stocks of heavy-duty flatcars suitable for the shipping of medium or heavy tanks the Soviets will only be able to meet their requirements for large-scale operations by a concentration of such cars at certain points. Such concentrations of railroad cars cannot be camouflaged and they would indicate imminent operations well in advance of D-day.

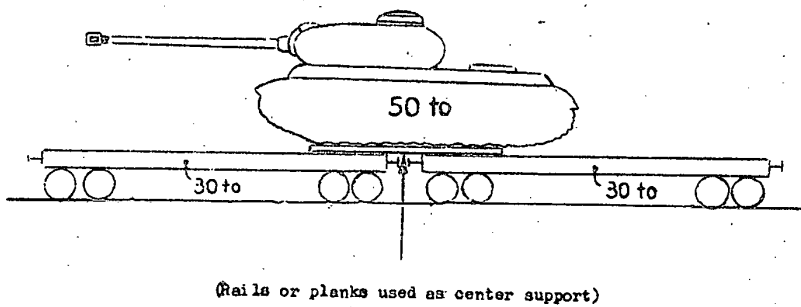
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1 Annex: Improvised loading of Heavy Soviet Tanks on flatcars with insufficient load capacity.

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Improvised Loading of Heavy Soviet Tanks On Flatcars with Insufficient
Load Capacity



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